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ABSTRACT

High school agriculture instructors have served as adjunct professors in the California Polytechnic State University agricultural education department for the past 5 years. The adjuncts use release time from their high school district to contribute up to 5 days' service in the university program. The program helps the university to establish collaboration with area high schools and to prepare agriculture education graduates to teach. Adjunct professors have the following duties: (1) team teach university-based and field-based professional education classes, methods classes, or other classes with a faculty member; (2) aid in supervising student teachers; (3) lead student workshops; (4) participate in a student teacher tour; (5) assist in screening students for the program; and (6) serve as resource persons for faculty and students. Appointments as adjunct professors are offered to outstanding high school teachers; they receive stipends and expense reimbursement. Although the adjuncts are usually veteran teachers, young teachers may also serve. The program is funded as a model program by the California State university system. The program has been enthusiastically received by students, faculty, and the appointed high school teachers. Tne department faculty members become more knowledgeable about high school practices; adjunct professors develop relationships with college faculty, update their knowledge, and receive recognition; and student teachers are better prepared for the classroom. (KC)

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Adjunct Professors in Agricultural Education

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Introduction

For the past five years the Cal Poly Agricultural Education Department has obtained the professional services of highly respected high school agriculture instructors. A total of ten Adjunct Professors have served in this capacity during either the fall or spring quarter. Adjuncts have been granted release time from their high school districts and have contributed up to five days of service to Cal Poly's Agricultural Education program. The Adjunct Professorship is one important way for the university to establish collaborative instruction as a significant element in Agricultural Education's teacher education program. The Adjunct Professorship united university faculty and practitioners in a variety of instructional settings to better prepare new teachers for the profession. All parties have benefited from this program: university faculty gain knowledge of teaching practices and share that knowledge with university students; Adjuncts achieve a re-connection with larger issues in education and agricultural education, especially with scholarship in their fields and with issues which cross district, grade-level, or subject area boundaries; students are better prepared to grapple with the practical realities of the classroom and program they will soon enter; districts enjoy hiring better prepared teachers and the return to the classroom of enriched experienced educators.

Adjunct Duties

Typically, Adjunct Professors have performed the following kinds of duties: 1) team teach university-based and field-based professional education classes, methods classes, or

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other Agricultural Education classes, with a faculty member; 2) aid in the supervision of student teachers; 3) lead workshops, labs, or practicums for undergraduate and graduate students, and student teachers; 4) participate in the Student Teacher Tour; 5) assist in the screening process of students desiring to enter the credential program; 6) serve as a guest presenter for Alpha Tau Alpha meetings; and 7) serve as resource person to the departmental faculty and as an ex-officio advisor to students in the credential program.

Appointment Process

Faculty in the Agricultural Education Department identify and then invite outstanding high school teachers to participate in the program. Past practices have been to alternate between local teachers and those who must travel a great distance to the university campus. An Agricultural Education Department faculty member then contacts the appropriate district-level administrator to explain the Adjunct program and discuss the financial ramifications and professional benefits of their involvement in the program. Upon receiving approval from the district, the Dean of the School of Agricultural formally appoints the Adjunct to the position. Generally speaking the Adjunct Professors are seasoned veterans in the teaching profession, however, energetic young teachers have served in the Adjunct position as well.

Funding for the Program

The Adjunct Professor program started as a successful element in the Model Supervision Project granted to Cal Poly as an experimental program by The California State University system. For several years the program reimbursed school districts for the cost of hiring substitute teachers as well as providing funds for travel, food, and lodging. In addition, Adjunct Professors received a stipend for time spent above and beyond their normal work day. In recent years, the districts have been willing to share in the expense of providing release time for Adjuncts to participate in the program. Recently the

Agricultural Education Department has reimbursed districts for one-half of the cost of the substitute teacher, while the district has provided for travel, lodging, and meals for the Adjunct's participation. The department has felt so strongly about continuing the program that departmental discretionary funds have been used to support the program.

Recognition for Adjunct Participation

Adjunct Professors ultimately must be released from their district by action of their Board of Education. In doing so, the board recognizes the university's desire to obtain the services of a highly respected individual. Upon arrival on the Cal Poly campus, Adjuncts are introduced by the Dean of the School of Agriculture to members of the Department Head Council. Adjuncts are also introduced and asked to make brief remarks at either the Collegiate FFA Fall Feast or Spring Banquet depending upon which quarter they serve. Adjunct Professors share a faculty office - complete with their own personal Adjunct Professor nameplate - for the purposes of lesson planning and visiting with students. Upon completion of the Adjunct experience the Agricultural Education Department hosts a luncheon in honor of the Adjunct's participation and invites several campus dignitaries to attend. Adjuncts are also presented an embroidered Agricultural Education jacket in appreciation for their professional involvement. A perpetual plaque is located in the departmental office and contains the names of those who have served as Adjunct Professors. Wherever appropriate, Adjuncts are identified as members of our agricultural education faculty. This may include introductions at alumni activities, Cooperating Teacher Workshops, professional meetings, and in discussions with our students.

Results of the Program

Since the inception of the Adjunct Professor program, the Agricultural Education Department has wholeheartedly endorsed the opportunity to obtain the services of

respected high school agriculture teachers. Over the years our students have appreciated their interaction with Adjunct Professors and look forward to Adjunct presentations. Our students view the Adjuncts as providing relevant, up-to-date information for our program. The Adjuncts have expressed great satisfaction with their participation in the program and have found their involvement to be a real eye-opening experience. In recent years we have involved energetic young teachers in the program in hopes of not only receiving service from them, but also of "grooming" them for future service to the profession by serving as Cooperating Teachers in the not too distant future. District-level administrators view the program as a sound professional development opportunity for their faculty and have been enthusiastic to provide the release time necessary for participation in the program.

Benefits to the Participants

The Adjunct Professorship program has provided benefits to all groups involved in the project. The Agricultural Education Department has experienced the following benefits: university faculty gain in their knowledge of current high school-level teaching practices; the establishment of a collaborative effort between the university and local school districts strengthens the commitment of local districts to promote pre-service activities; Adjuncts help to screen teacher candidates and make recommendations which strengthen a candidate's professional preparation early-on in their professional program; Adjunct Professors become closer associated with the department and serve as presenters at annual Cooperating Teacher Workshops; university faculty have developed a closer relationship with high school teachers and receive a greater commitment from them to assist in the professional development of persons entering the teaching profession; Adjuncts cause the faculty to become more aware of the relevant issues that new teachers will need to be prepared to face in the high school setting; finally, Adjunct

Professors leave with a deeper knowledge of the departmental philosophy and programmatic decision making process which allow them to be better informed proponents of the teacher preparation procedures. Benefits to the local school district include hiring better prepared teachers through the influence of real field situation brought together by the Adjuncts; Adjuncts return to the high school setting with an enriched professional development activity; and, by receiving recognition of having one of their teachers selected to teach in the university setting. Cal Poly students benefit by being better prepared to grapple with the practical realities of the classroom and the department they will soon enter; receiving critiques of their lessons from a teacher who deals with high school students on a daily basis; the establishment of networks with high school teachers in the field; and by "previewing" potential Cooperating Teachers for their student teaching site. Finally, the Adjunct Professors benefit by achieving a re-connection with larger issues in education and agricultural education; receiving personal recognition by being invited to participate in the program; being better prepared to serve as Cooperating Teacher; and, by observing a variety of strong high school programs and acquiring new ideas via participation in the Student Teacher Tour.